

FD Program Report
Joyce Cartagena



The FD program at Cal State Fullerton kicked off with an orientation and welcome reception where we were greeted by the program organizers as well as our mentor professors. The next day, we had our first FD workshop on Reflective Teaching with Bruce Rubin. I thought it was a very appropriate introduction for the entire FD program because it helped us set our overall goals as teachers. The Scientific Teaching workshop with Vikki Costa, then gave a good follow-up by guiding us in identifying the learning goals that we set for our students. The entire framework of curriculum design was covered by Vikki in the sessions we had with her. I particularly liked the workshops on Assessment and Diversity in Learning. The session on Assessment provided us with very practical ways to evaluate students' learning that are applicable to most types of classroom settings, even to Japanese classrooms. With the workshop on Diversity in learning, we realized that as much as diversity is favorable and can enhance science, diversity in students' learning can sometimes be difficult to handle. Thus, it is important for teachers to recognize that diversity exists among students in his/her classroom. This particular workshop gave us ideas on how to make the classroom more inclusive and encourage participative learning in all students. The Active Learning session with Anne Houtman and Critical thinking workshop with Kathryn Angus

were also particularly informative and provided us with a variety of ways/strategies to guide students in their learning.

Working with a mentor professor is one of the highlights of the FD program. I was assigned to Dr. Amybeth Cohen who gave me enough freedom to learn with her and deliver the lecture for one session of her class. At first, I was feeling intimidated when I learned that I have to teach Plant Physiology because it is not my specialty. But it helped a lot that we started corresponding with the mentor professor even before coming to CSUF, which enabled us to prepare for the lecture ahead of time. Giving a lecture to Dr. Cohen's class was a great experience for me. Most of the students responded to my lecture; something I don't usually experience with Japanese students. But this experience will be a good basis for the future classes that I will handle.

Most of what we learned from the workshops were translated into how we delivered our lectures/presentations, which is an indication of how effective the FD program is. It was nice how the FD training was concluded. We were given the chance to reflect on our lectures/presentations and identify ways to improve our weaknesses.

Aside from the workshops, we also enjoyed cultural/social activities such as going to the pub and to a baseball game. It was also nice to meet and chat with previous mentor professors who eagerly shared their teaching experiences with us. The organizers did a great job in designing each of the activities for this program while at the same time making sure that the program meets the needs of every participant. The overall experience was worthwhile and gratifying.